THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The total length of NH-17 in Kerala is about 421 Kms. out of which 24 kms. is double lane.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Development including widening of National Highways is a continuous process. Work of widening 16 km. carriageway is in hand. Further widening of 28 km. has been included in the current Annual Plan. In addition, land acquisition for widening in about 18 kms. has also been included in the current plan.

**Financial performance of Calcutta Port**

1059. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the newsitem "Calcutta port battles for survival" published in the Times of India dated 24th June, 2000;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to address the problems of the Calcutta port highlighted in the newsitem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government is seized of the issues raised in the newsitem *viz.* corporatisation of Calcutta Port, constant siltation problem, payment of arrears to the pensioners, separation of Haldia Dock Complex and opposition of the Dock workers to partial mechanisation.

(c) There is no proposal to corporatise the Calcutta Port and, at present there is no proposal to separate Haldia Dock Complex from Calcutta Port Trust. To avoid falling depth due to siltuation of the river leading to Haldia Port, continuous dredging is being carried out by the Dredging Corporation of India. The payment of arrears to pensioners can be made from the surplus funds available with the Calcutta Dock Labour Board. Mechanisation of Port facilities, being a necessity to

increase productivity, is being undertaken generally in consultation with the Dock Workers Unions.

**Tender Norms for Bidders/Contractors for National Corridor**

1060. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have fixed up any prequalification norms/criteria for the tender bidders/contractors, road builders who want to participate in the construction of National Corridor; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Contracting firms are prequalified on the basis of their annual turn over, experience of executing projects of similar nature, access to funds and equipment, experience of key personnel, past performance and bid capacity etc.

**Declaration of New National Highways in Kerala**

1061. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have cleared a proposal for designating some stretches of roads in Kerala as National Highways; and

(b) if so, which are these stretches of roads and when the work is proposed to be taken up and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.